

Best Beginnings STARS to Quality

State Fiscal Year 2014

Who is eligible?

- All licensed/registered child care programs and Head Start programs are eligible to apply for STARS
- Specific focus on high needs children and families

Benefits of STARS for children and families

- Parents can use STARS to assist in choosing the best child care for their children
- Supports school readiness for young children

Benefits of STARS to Early Childhood in Montana

The State expects a strong return on investment for the Best Beginnings Scholarship Program in which programs that serve these children are eligible to receive adjusted reimbursement rates if they are achieving high STAR levels.

STARS to Quality currently impacts 5,491 children, or 30% of the total capacity of licensed facilities in the state.

* Currently, there are 201 programs participating in STARS to Quality. There are 13 programs on a waiting list as of January 30, 2015.

What is Best Beginnings STARS to Quality?

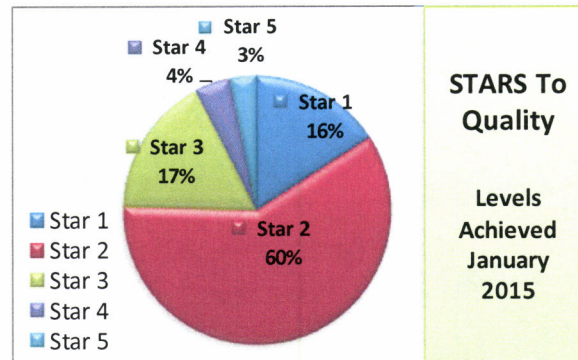
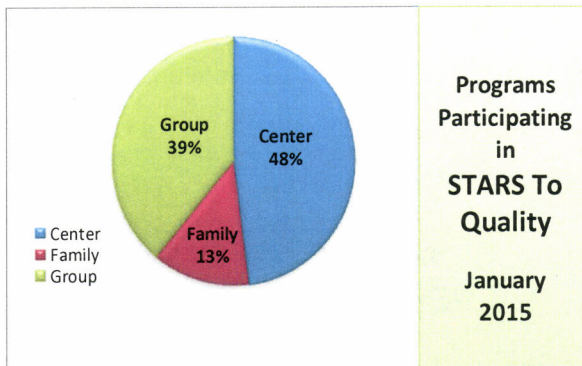
The Best Beginnings STARS to Quality Program is a pay for performance strategy supporting public/private partnerships with early childhood programs, also referred to as a Quality Rating and Improvement System.

Key Components of the Program:

- Voluntary for licensed child care centers, registered family and group child care homes, Head Start and Early Head Start facilities, campus lab schools, tribal child care
- 5 star system with research-based performance criteria consistent with national best practice standards in the following categories:
 - ◇ Staff Qualifications and Professional Development
 - ◇ Caregiver to Child Ratio and Group Sizes
 - ◇ Partnering with Parents and Community Referral
 - ◇ Business Management and Leadership
 - ◇ High Quality Supportive Learning Environments
- Financial Incentives, Training, Education Scholarships, and Professional Coaching



STARS to Quality Achievements - January 30, 2015



Frequently Asked Questions:

How do early childhood programs use performance incentives?

- 78% of incentive payments have been directed to Teaching Supplies and Personnel

How often are programs rated?

- A STAR level is effective for one year
- Programs can apply quarterly

What is the rating process?

- Programs meet criteria in a validated system
- Independent assessment with industry standard tools

How many hours of training and support?

Since the launch of the field test in 2010 there have been:

- Over 2800 hours of training completed by caregivers
- Over 15,000 hours of coaching and technical assistance provided to STARS participants.

Environmental Rating Scale Improvements between September 2010 and June 2014

